

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

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This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) A device for fixing an object to a tree, the device including:

an elongate body, one end of which is adapted for attachment to a tree, in use an object being slidably mounted on the elongate body, and

a device for biasing an object slidably mounted on the elongate body towards the end of the body adapted for attachment to the tree,

in use, pressure resulting from growth of the tree being transmitted to the object and pushing it along the elongate body against the bias and away from the tree.

2. (original) A device according to Claim 1, wherein the elongate body is adapted for attachment to a tree by being fitted with a fixing member.

3. (original) A device according to Claim 2, wherein the fixing member tapers to a sharp end point.

4. (currently amended) A device according to Claim 2 [[or 3]], wherein the fixing member is provided with a screw thread for helping insert it into the tree and keep it in place.

5. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the biasing device applies pressure that is usually slightly lower than that pressure

resulting from expansion of a growing tree, e.g. a pressure in the range of 7 - 8 kg/cm².

6. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the biasing device is formed of a resilient material.

7. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the biasing device comprises a compression spring.

8. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein one end of the biasing device abuts the object.

9. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, further including a component, such as a washer or a ring, that is slidably mounted on the elongate body between the object and the tree so that the tree at least partially contacts the component, the component at least partially transmitting the pressure to the object.

10. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the length of the elongate body is adjustable.

11. (original) A device according to Claim 10, wherein the elongate body is comprised of a plurality of elongate members.

12. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the elongate member is generally cylindrical.

13. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein some or all of the components forming the device are formed of plastics or metal material, such as stainless steel.

14. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the object is part of a lightning protection system for the tree.

15. (original) A device for fixing an object to a tree, the device including:

an elongate body, one end of which is adapted for attachment to a tree;

an object slidably mounted on the elongate body, and

a device for biasing the object towards the end of the body adapted for attachment to the tree,

in use, pressure resulting from growth of the tree being transmitted to the object and pushing it along the elongate body against the bias and away from the tree.

16. (currently amended) A lightning protection system for a tree including a device according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 15.

17. (cancelled)